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ABSTRACT

Using recent literature, this paper examines current trends and issues in career education for all levels, kindergarten through adult. Some of the observations made about career education trends and issues are as follows: (1) career education is a viable construct; (2) career education, career guidance, and career development are distinct but related terms; (3) career education is fundamental in helping individuals cope with the changing workplace; (4) career education is a lifelong need; (5) career education can help at-risk youth make the transition from school to work; and (6) computers are a vital medium for the delivery of career education. Seventy-nine references are provided. (SK)

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TRENDS AND ISSUES IN CAREER EDUCATION 1988

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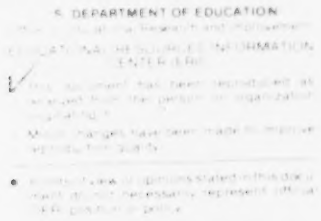

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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is 1 of 16 clearinghouses in a national information system that is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. This paper was developed to fulfill one of the functions of the clearinghouse--interpreting the literature in the ERIC database. This paper should be of interest to anyone seeking an overview of current issues and recent developments in career education.

ERIC/ACVE would like to thank Ida Halasz for her work in the preparation of this paper. Dr. Halasz is Career Education Specialist at ERIC/ACVE and Director of the National Academy, The Center on Education and Training for Employment. In more than 11 years at The Ohio State University, her roles have included graduate research associate, teacher educator, research specialist, and Associate Director for Organizational Development. Prior to working at the Center, she was a career education specialist at the high school level. Her research publications include studies of time on task, computer-based training, job placement, and planning career guidance programs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Debate continues over the definition of career education and the related terms career guidance and career development. Although levels of funding have changed since the 1970s, career education remains a dynamic aspect of education and workplace programs. Workplace and demographic changes have only increased the need for preparation and planning for work and life.

Examination of trends and issues related to helping individuals with career concerns distinguishes the following five areas:

1. Career education as a viable construct
2. The impact of the changing workplace
3. Programs for adults
4. Programs for youth with special needs
5. The use of computers in career education

The viability of the concept of career education has undergone considerable debate since the 1970s. Perceived originally by some as a vehicle for educational reform, career education would seem to have a place in the reform movements of the 1980s. An important issue in this debate is whether career education is a program that stands on its own or whether it should be integrated into mainstream educational programs.

Constant changes in the composition of the work force, the skill requirements of jobs, and the structure of the economy affect not only the way schools must prepare students for their future work roles but also the way adults already in the labor force must remain flexible and adaptive. Responsive career education programs should be developed in collaboration with employers, focusing on such basic skills as decision making, future planning, social competence, critical thinking, and ability to learn.

Among the forces changing the workplace are the shrinking youth population and the influx of women and immigrants. Career education programs must expand beyond the K-12 framework to provide adults with assistance in making midlife career transitions, balancing work and family responsibilities, coping with displacement, and following nontraditional career paths.

Because fewer youth are available in the entry-level labor pool, more attention is being paid to youth with special needs--the disadvantaged and the physically and learning disabled--as potential employees. The causes and consequences of

dropping out are being documented, and efforts are being made to help at-risk youth understand the connection between staying in school and future success in careers. Comprehensive services that combine the forces of career and vocational education, special education, rehabilitation, and employers assist at-risk youth in the transition from school to work.

The impact of technology on the workplace is one trend affecting career education. Another is the use of technology as an educational medium. A number of computerized systems have evolved for delivering career-related information and assisting career exploration and decision making, increasingly microcomputer based. State and national networks for gathering occupational information are being developed. Career guidance for at-risk youth is particularly being enhanced by the use of computers as a motivational tool.

Information on trends and issues in career education may be found in the ERIC system using the following descriptors: Adult Education, *Career Education, Career Guidance, Computer Uses in Education, *Education Work Relationship, *Educational Trends, *Employment Patterns, *High Risk Students, Occupational Information, *Technological Advancement, Work Environment. Asterisks indicate descriptors having particular relevance.

INTRODUCTION

Although some people regard career education as K-12 school-based preparation for paid employment, the definition has evolved to include programs offered in diverse nonschool settings to a broader range of individuals, including adults of all ages. Because it is less frequently called career education, it may appear that career education is steadily losing its impact as an educational reform movement and a factor in society. Examination of the trends and issues related to helping individuals with career concerns indicates that, whatever it is called, career education continues to be a dynamic aspect of education and workplace programs. The 1985 Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward schools indicated that over half (57 percent) of the respondents felt that career education should be required for all students, whether college-bound or not. In its broadest definition, career education covers the life span and includes recurrent preparation for all types of paid and unpaid work (Hoyt 1975).

Career guidance and career development served as the foundation of career education. Although sometimes used interchangeably, these terms have precise, distinct meanings. Gysbers et al. (1984) believe that the change in names and meanings constitutes a trend in itself. It can also be considered an issue, since there is controversy about the definition. Definitions that have been offered by some of the experts who have helped expand the knowledge base about fostering careers include the following:

- **Career Education**--an effort aimed at refocusing education and the broader community to help individuals acquire and use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to make paid and unpaid work more meaningful, productive, and satisfying (Hoyt 1977).

- **Career Guidance**--a systematic program designed to increase one's knowledge of self, occupations, training paths, life-styles, labor market trends, employability skills, and the decision-making process in order to gain self-direction through integrating work, family, leisure, and community roles (Hansen 1977).

- **Career Development**--the total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic, and cultural factors that combine to shape one's career; those aspects of individuals' experiences that are relevant for personal choice, entry, and progress in educational, vocational, and avocational pursuits; also, the process by which one develops and refines such characteristics as self and career identity, planfulness, and career maturity (Herr and Cramer 1979).

- **Life Career Development**--involves one's whole life, not just occupation. It concerns the whole person and one's needs, wants, capacities, and potentials within the ever-changing contexts of life (Wolfe and Kolb 1980).

- Career--interaction of various life roles over the life span. The combination is a sequence of all the roles one may play during a lifetime and the pattern in which they fit together at any point in time (Super 1981).

Career education has been a public concept since 1970 when the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland, Jr., formally launched it as an education reform. This reform movement was indirectly funded through the Education Amendments of 1972 and directly funded through Section 406 of the Education Amendments of 1974 and the Career Education Incentive Act of 1978. The latter was repealed in 1981, causing many supporters to fear that career education would disappear, like so many other reform movements have, without federal support. This paper does not chronicle the evolution of career education because a comprehensive overview has recently been published by ERIC/ACVE. *Career Education in Transition: Trends and Implications for the Future* by Kenneth Hoyt and Karen Shylo (1987) provides historical documentation of the key legislation and leaders that have shaped career education in the United States.

Why career education did not cease to exist is probably attributable, at least in part, to its common sense precepts supported by research, the ever-growing need for frameworks to order the chaos of living in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society, and a number of committed exponents who have continued the national dialogue about career education. Another reason for its continuation is the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act (PL 98-524, 1984), which specifies many career education types of activities as fundable career guidance priorities. Career education is supported by those who crusade for its continuation as a critical component of educational, community, and workplace programs. Career education continues to be shaped to meet the changing needs of a complex society. Not only is the workplace changing, so is the population. Conversely, career education continues to be an important component of programs that educate individuals throughout their lives.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the recent trends and issues that are emerging in the broad area of career education. Trends and issues are so interrelated that many people consider them one phenomenon. In fact a **trend** is a direction or a growing area of development in a field, whereas an **issue** is a topic or area over which there is debate or controversy. Frequently, several issues develop as a trend emerges. For example, as discussed earlier, it is a trend (according to Gysbers et al. 1984) that the name career education is changing at the same time that its definition is a controversial issue. The following criteria were used in selecting the trends and issues for discussion in this paper: (1) the emergence of the area as a trend or issue within the recent literature and (2) changes within the areas as reflected in the recent literature and practice. For the most part, the literature of the past 3 years, 1985-1988, is discussed in this paper.

Five trend and issue areas are examined, albeit briefly and certainly not in depth. Although a trends and issues paper is useful to readers who want a quick update and access to recent references, a simultaneous drawback is the necessarily superficial treatment of trends and issues that could each encompass a book-length document if adequately examined. The five trend and issue areas are--

- career education as a viable construct,

- o impact of the changing workplace,
- o programs for adults,
- o programs for youth with special needs, and
- o use of computers in career education.

CAREER EDUCATION AS A VIABLE CONSTRUCT

Much of the recent educational literature that addresses career education attempts to prove that career education exists and is a viable construct. Perhaps one reason for this defense is that the numbers of articles and reports about career education per se are diminishing. Indeed, a search of the ERIC database indicates a steady decrease in the numbers of entries that cite career education or career development as descriptors. Malpiedi and Hillison (1986), in studying this decrease of published articles and dissertations, found that career education is not disappearing. Rather, it has become more broadly diffused at the local school level, which is in fact accomplishing one of its goals stated early in the 1970s. Marland, Hoyt, and others emphasized that career education should not become an add-on, stand-alone subject but should become integrated into every appropriate aspect of the curriculum (Marland 1977). Herr (1987) states that--

> career education's attempt to make all education more career relevant has been translated into systematic efforts to infuse into any form of subject matter examples from work or career development concepts which help students make the connection between what they are studying, however scientific or philosophical it may be, to the application of this content in the problem-solving or task performances which characterize various forms of work. (p. 25)

On the other hand, this diffusion and absence of specific discussion about career education causes concern for proponents who point out that *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983) and other reports have neglected to include it in their recommendations for reform. Hansen (1987) believes that although great strides were made in the 1970s in career education programs, they are diminishing as state education agencies and school districts move "back to the basics" recommended by education reformers. Hansen asserts that there is nothing more basic than career decision making and that career education programs emphasize basic skills as the foundation for satisfying careers.

Herr (1987) also emphasizes that a major contribution of the career education movement during the past decade has been its attention to the role of basic skills in a complex, industrialized society. Not confining basic skills to reading, writing, and computation skills, he considers the principles of technology, self-understanding and personal decision-making skills, career management, and job access as central educational goals that can be provided through career education. Herr feels that his perspective is supported by the 1985 report of the Committee for Economic Development, which indicates that specific occupational skills are less crucial for entry-level employment than a generally high level of literacy, responsible attitudes toward work, the ability to communicate well, and the ability to learn. The report further

says that employers look for youth who demonstrate a set of attitudes, abilities, and behaviors associated with a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, pride, teamwork, and enthusiasm.

What is really at issue for many proponents of career education is whether the call for educational reform in the mid-1980s is simply another call for career education (Nielsen 1984; Stock 1984). There is some indignation that the so-called reforms are not new but old, reiterating career education tenets that have already been more than adequately developed but lacking the political and funding clout to become pervasive. Indeed, many of the concepts calling for relevance in the curriculum and a solid grounding in basic skills echo the career education rhetoric of the 1970s. Hoyt (1985), on the other hand, believes that the mid-1980s reform movement has not gone far enough in identifying career education as the prerequisite and key strategy for restructuring education.

Hoyt (1987a) also believes that career education is quite healthy, stating that "no other major educational effort once funded--and later dropped--by the Federal Government comes close to the track record of career education when matters of survival are considered" (p. 3). He has been a primary force in linking career education supporters through his free newsletter for the National Career Education Leaders' Communication Network. Approximately 400 members of the Network, who can be considered very supportive of career education, annually rate the "health" of career education. The results for 1982-1986 indicate that career education has stabilized in most parts of the country, neither growing nor declining rapidly. At the same time, although most would keep the name career education, a growing number of respondents believe it should be changed to career development, career guidance, life education, employability education, or another name (Hoyt 1987b).

Summary

It appears that there is a trend to de-emphasize career education, not as a concept or programmatic aspect of education, but as a stand-alone program. Although the early proponents of career education felt it must be integrated into mainstream education to succeed, the apparent success of its integration at some level has become a controversial issue. Another issue is whether or not the key elements of the career education movement, such as understanding how basic skills are critical to workplace success, are indeed attributable to career education. For those who wish to perpetuate the career education movement as a distinct contributor to (if not the standard-bearer of) educational reform, the infusion and dilution of career education is a bittersweet reward.

IMPACT OF THE CHANGING WORKPLACE

There is a very obvious interaction between the social, political, and economic environment and individuals' career development and opportunities. Much of the career education literature deals with the rapidity of change, how the specific changes affect careers, and how education must prepare youth for the known and unknown changes that will occur. There is no denying that the workplace is changing rapidly, almost faster than is comprehended by most people. These changes affect every aspect of the workplace, directly or indirectly. Trend-watchers such as Bolles (1983) and Naisbitt (1985) have pointed out that multiple revolutions are occurring simultaneously. Patterson (1985) lists the following important revolutions:

- The shift from a national to a global marketplace for all nations; interdependence rather than competition may become the key to success.
- A shift from higher-priced to lower-priced blue collar workers, with Mexican and Taiwanese laborers working for about $1.25 per hour versus $16 per hour for U.S. laborers.
- A shift in manufacturing from non-technology to high technology with robots replacing workers at $4.00 per hour, going down to $1.00 per hour by 1990; technology is directly and indirectly creating more jobs than are displaced.
- A shift from working for large corporations to working for oneself or in smaller firms; 600,000 new companies are formed per year and 9 million jobs are being created by small businesses during the 1980s, 10 times the rate of the 1970s.
- The biggest revolution of all, the shift from a manufacturing to an information-based economy, with 90 percent of all new jobs related to the creation, processing, and distribution of information. These jobs are not exotic; they include teacher, secretary, counselor, accountant, manager, banker, technician, lawyer, computer programmer, and clerk.

Naisbitt (1985) contends that the challenge for all major companies, organizations, and professions is to reinvent themselves to keep pace with the explosive change. Career development must also be reinvented, according to Patterson (1985), to provide the concepts necessary to cope with and thrive in this emerging "Information Society." Training and retraining are no longer sufficient; to remain current and viable, workers must be trained continuously. Dede (1984) believes that the occupational half-life, or amount of time it takes for one-half of the knowledge, training, and skills of an occupation to become obsolete, is tending to decrease. For most occupations it is 4-5 years, and for technical occupations it is less than 18 months.

Career Education Programs for a Changing Workplace

There is general agreement that there are no sure predictors for developing relevant educational programs that prepare individuals for future occupations. Lotto (1986) states that "what does seem clear is that today's youth will work in careers characterized by change, change within occupations requiring continued upgrading and retraining, and careers characterized by change across occupational areas" (p. 329). All students, college-bound or not, will need to be proficient in basic skills, occupational skills, world-of-work knowledge, work values and attitudes, and job-seeking, entry, and maintenance skills. Despite these needs, Lotto believes that career development "has no home" in the high school because proficiency in academic areas is considered more important than career development (p. 329). An issue, therefore, is the locus of responsibility for career development in the high school. If infusion is best because it integrates the subject matter with career development, then the teacher should be most responsible for career education.

Typical high school teachers are more concerned with their subject matter, leaving much of the responsibility to career guidance counselors. Counselors, in turn, have huge loads of up to 700 students and can only provide career development counseling and content haphazardly (Carroll 1985). The result is that although a great deal of information is available to students, they do not always know where and how to access it or how to apply it once they have discovered the sources. Not all students leave high school with the necessary career development tools to negotiate successfully the numerous career decisions they will have to make throughout their lives. They are not, in many cases, equipped for the many occupational shifts they will be making during their working lives.

The need for multiple career development competencies for youth and adults has been addressed in a nationwide project funded by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (Lester and McCormac 1987):

> No longer is it acceptable for individuals to receive career guidance services only when choosing an occupation. . . . Career guidance should be an organized program that helps people to explore their potential and their career options; understand occupational and labor market information; acquire decision making, planning and employability skills; and integrate an understanding of the world of work with one's role in that world. (p. 47)

Neither these nor the following recommendations appear to be substantively new or different from those made during the 1970s. The implication in some of the literature appears to be that counselors have not had the opportunities to perform their responsibilities due to large student loads as well as access to students and lack of materials. Several authors contend that counselors could, given reasonable-sized student loads and schoolwide support, provide more and better career guidance services. One example is the list of strategies cited by Jenkins (1987), who states that counselors should--

- o work with teachers to demonstrate how the core curriculum relates to the rapidly changing job market;
- o provide career seminars and fairs with representatives from the business community;

- develop career shadowing experiences, internships, and work experiences;
- provide seminars for parents to enable them to continue the career guidance process at home;
- strengthen articulation between the business community and postsecondary institutions to provide a smooth transition from high school to college and/or to the job market; and
- provide developmental college planning and job preparation seminars that enable students to do self-marketing, prepare a job/college portfolio, develop a resume, prepare an application, prepare for an interview and learn test-taking techniques for taking PSAT, SAT, ACT, GATB, or other similar tests required for entry-level postsecondary opportunities. (p. 61)

Business Needs for a Qualified Work Force

A recent study, *Building a Quality Workforce* (1988), was jointly conducted by the U.S. Departments of Labor, Education, and Commerce to identify the needs of the business community for entry-level workers, specify the deficiencies in their basic or core skills, and determine strategies to improve career preparation collaboratively. The findings, based upon in-depth interviews with a national cross-section of 134 employers and 34 educators, include the following:

- The economy and the workplace are changing rapidly, and the pace of change is accelerating.
- The jobs themselves are changing in content and skill requirements, regardless of type or size of business.
- The "basic skills gap" between the needs of business and the qualifications of the entry-level workers available to business is widening.
- Employers are practically unanimous in their concern that competencies of entry-level workers are deficient. These include the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and communication. Deficiencies were also found in such abilities as problem solving, teamwork, initiative, and adaptability.
- These skills deficiencies in the workplace are costing U.S. business monetarily, through waste, lost productivity, increased remediation costs, reduced product quality, and ultimately a loss in competitiveness.
- Educators agree with business about the overall goals of education and about the skills needed in the workplace. However, the majority of educators maintain that their graduates are well prepared for entry-level positions, and only a few educators acknowledge that the gaps are as severe as business indicates.
- Educators may not be translating their understanding of business' needs into what happens in the classroom.
- Employers must do a better job of anticipating future work force needs and communicating these needs to educators, parents, students, and other community resources that can help address these needs.
- Both employers and educators stress the need to develop mechanisms to

reduce the isolation of their worlds in order to improve students' preparation for the workplace and for responsible adulthood.

- Although education reform efforts have brought undeniable progress, many experts conclude that the non-college bound and dropouts have been least affected.

- Aggressive action may be needed by business and education to learn from each other and to change the way education is provided to ensure a high quality work force and a productive nation. (pp. 4-5)

The primary conclusion of the study is that the quality of education must be improved through fundamental education reforms in the schools. Not surprisingly, many of the reforms are familiar to career educators who have espoused them for almost 2 decades. These "reforms" include increased accountability to meet rigorous performance standards; decentralization toward school-based management and accountability; improved curriculum through basics that better relate to the workplace; creative recruitment and rewarding of good teachers and principals; earlier and better intervention to prevent "at-risk" students from dropping out; and more business-like competitiveness to identify and seize market niches in education. The other two principal conclusions, also familiar to career educators, are that businesses must mobilize to assist schools in ways that capitalize on their comparative strengths and advantages and that the community must mobilize to integrate its efforts to ensure quality in education and in the work force.

New Basic Skills for a Flexible Work Force

Although not discounting the mastery of traditional basic skills as an important function of education for a flexible work force, authors such as Patterson (1985) contend that the most necessary basic skills are (1) **decision making**, with abilities to generate alternatives, project outcomes, assess probabilities, and take well-considered action and risks; (2) **future planning skills** for life, career, and education, with abilities to focus on the future and discern transferable skills; (3) **social and personal life skills** that take into account the shrinking world and the need to communicate internationally, take responsibility, and have self-esteem; and (4) **skills for becoming a good learner**, or learning to learn new jobs quickly and efficiently. In effect, the necessary basic skills enable one to be highly flexible in response to inevitable changes and to become skilled in lifelong learning.

Summary

Unquestionably, the changes in the workplace and, for that matter, in the larger society, affect individuals' career development. This trend appears to be escalating, with futurists' predictions of rapid change no longer seeming to be implausible or fanciful. It is important to keep a perspective on the changes and the impact they will have on day-to-day work life and individuals' careers. Even rapid change can be anticipated by developing career plans and expectations that are flexible and change-oriented. The trend for rapid changes will not change, in most likelihood. Career education for youth and adults will increasingly need to provide mechanisms to assist individuals and organizations in allowing for positive growth as a result of the changes.

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

The percentage of adults continues to grow as the U.S. population ages. The 16-24 age range peaked at 36 million in 1980, after more than 2 decades of growth. The U.S. Department of Labor (Johnston and Packer 1987) predicts that there will be a demographic bulge in the prime age (24-44) work force, from 39 million in 1975 to over 60 million in 1990. In the year 2000, the average worker will be 39 years old. Most of the people who will be in the work force in the year 2000 are already working. The new additions will be more adults, mostly immigrants and women who had not previously worked. By the year 2000, women will comprise 47 percent of the work force. Some experts also believe that people will work longer, electing not to take early retirement or holding postretirement jobs (Johnston and Packer 1987). Adults and retirees who had not previously had many options to work will have more options to work. Adults will change jobs more frequently, some by choice, others through factory closings and business buyouts. The growing trend in career education for adults is a necessity born of the changes in the workplace and workers' increasing shifts to accommodate the changes.

In 1987, the National Career Development Association (NCDA), the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education commissioned the Gallup Organization to conduct a national survey on how a representative cross-section of adults plans for careers. The results (NCDA 1988) provide an overview of adults' needs for career development information. Nearly 28 million adults are changing or expect to change jobs within the next 3 years. Whether or not they plan to change jobs by choice, nearly 11 million say that they need help in selecting, changing, or obtaining a job. At least 5 million expect to be forced to change their employment because of business closings and other factors.

Respondents felt that many of the underlying causes of career change are related to problems such as job stress (45 percent) and conflict between work and family relationships (33 percent). There is an overwhelming need for assistance in career planning and use of labor market information. Results indicated that only 39 percent had a career plan to begin with, and 64 percent said if they were to start over, they would get more information about their potential choices. About 15 percent who need help do not know where to get it, with 2 1/2 times as many blacks as whites giving this response. Nearly half said that even if information is available, adults do not know how to use it.

Midlife Career Transitions

The results of the Gallup survey (NCDA 1988) are indicative of the trend in midlife career changes. Miller and Musgrove (1986) attribute this phenomenon to a "curious combination of conditions" in U.S. history that allow millions of adults to feel secure enough economically and socially to

want jobs that satisfy higher-level needs. In addition to these conditions that include the rapidly changing nature and types of jobs, career development theorists now recognize that adults change and require adjustment throughout the life span. The following characteristics of adults in career transition are derived from a review of the literature (Cross 1981; Johnson 1986; Knowles 1978; Schlossberg 1984):

- Adults are self-directed and capable of making career decisions and plans.
- Adults possess the basic skills for learning how to make career decisions and plans.
- Adults seek experiences that can help them take actions toward reaching their career objectives.
- Adults have individual life experiences and ways of thinking that affect their career decisions and plans.
- Adults apply what they learn.

A new subprofession, midlife career counselor, is emerging to accommodate adults who want direction and support through their career changes (Miller and Musgrove 1986). Most traditionally trained counselors do not have the skills or the knowledge to help adults. Career counselors have typically been prepared to understand the developmental needs of post-high school individuals who are 18 to 24 years old, but not the needs of older adults in transition (Johnson 1986). These adults want occupational information, job listings, and locations of job training programs in addition to assistance in self-evaluation, goal setting, and career decision making (Arbeiter et al. 1976). Hample (1986), on the other hand, contends that few adults want simple advice or testing. Their concerns "often involve multiple, complex issues that have a long history and represent a confused sense of self, life, and work" (p. 15). He advocates using cognitive-behavioral intervention strategies to help adults identify the crux of their career dilemmas and move toward achievable goals.

Family Career Counseling

A related aspect of career counseling that is beginning to emerge, according to Miller (1986), is helping adults deal with the interrelated, multiple stresses of career and family roles. Recent trends, such as both men and women needing to work to provide the essential family income and single-parent families, have created pressures for redefining or blending the roles of parent, spouse, worker, and sometimes returning student. Women are less likely to work "only until the baby comes" and more likely to view working as a long-term career. Fitzgerald (1986) suggests that young women may initially experience "pseudoexploration," delaying their career exploration and choice until they have been married and had children. Men, too, are changing their roles in the family. Increasing numbers are single parents. Whether married or not, they are gradually becoming more actively involved with raising their children (Thompson 1983). Divorce and remarriage are creating blended families that beget new types of tensions and problems.

Miller (1986) believes a more comprehensive model is needed to help adults understand and cope with their nontraditional roles and increasingly diverse responsibilities. She presents a framework, "the three-ring circus: stages of career, relationship, and family" that incorporates--

1. Super's (1957) stages of adulthood

and **career**: exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline

2. The **relationship** stages: pink cloud, disillusionment, personal growth, bridge building, and reconnection

3. Stolte-Heiskanen's (1974) **family** stages (assuming at least one child): establishment, new parent, school age, post-parental, and aging

Numerous role conflicts and problems can arise as family members move through the stages of this "three-ring circus." Effective career counselors will help adults select the strategies for moving through these stages that are most congruent with their values and life goals. Obviously, this is not a simple process, but one that appears increasingly necessary to provide the life career counseling adults require in this complex society and work world.

Displaced Worker Programs

Not all adults change jobs because they want to find meaning in work or want to move up the career ladder. Nearly 10 million U.S. workers lost their jobs to plant closings and layoffs during the past 5 years, 1983-1988. The majority, or 71 percent, of those older workers (4.7 million) have been re-employed, but only half of them match or exceed their previous income (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 1988). Even though economists say this is a normal pattern, most of these displaced workers experienced problems finding new jobs and adjusting to them (Ashley 1986). Most would have benefited from counseling. Counseling and job-search training are increasingly offered by unions, employment services, and company-provided outplacement services. Workers in a study conducted by Ashley (1986) found the following specific aspects of job counseling most helpful:

- Developing a broader description of their former jobs and responsibilities
- Learning to identify and apply their transferable skills to other occupations
- Role playing interview sessions
- Writing cover letters and thank-you letters
- Learning to use the telephone for the job search and self-marketing
- Developing and using personal networks to obtain job leads
- Initially setting short-term life goals and job objectives
- Spending time each day working on finding a job

Ashley feels that workers need and benefit from continuing counseling and support during the early phases of the job adjustment. Some may continue to feel depressed and discouraged and experience a lack of motivation. Career development programs can help them accept new ways of working, develop long-range views of careers, accept personal responsibility for career and life goals, and seek opportunities for education and training to help attain their goals.

Workplace Career Programs

The most important trend in adult career development is human resource planning in business organizations (Hall 1986). Increasingly, strategic resource planning is tied to the systematic career development of employ-

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ees. Career development is a system that includes the following components (Slavenski 1987):

- **Matching/selecting** includes the creation of job information through job analysis (profiles of skills, knowledge, experience, and tasks) and use of assessment center technology in selection.

- **Performance planning and previewing** is the "heart of the system" because current job performance is the key to present and future career growth.

- **Individual career development** is supported by discussions, career workbooks, career books by department, job profiles, training of managers to support career development, career planning workshops, and career interest forms.

- **Department career development/succession planning** identifies employee potential and readiness for promotion vis-a-vis the company's need to replace and develop people.

- **Career planning programs** provide employees with information about their aptitudes/skills and help them develop a career path relative to the opportunities in the company and beyond.

An emerging trend in the career path area is the option of making nontraditional moves such as rotating through lateral jobs rather than following an upward trajectory. Upward career paths may have less relevance for many knowledge workers, although some companies continue to manage them in the traditional way. "Up is not the only way" is a phrase coined by Kaye (1982) in writing about the need for alternative career movements, including downward and exploratory moves. Professionals, such as engineers and researchers, can often benefit themselves and their companies by having well-planned lateral moves. Some businesses such as Citicorp, Club Med, and 3M have found that rotation or lateral moves are a key to fostering competitive innovation among their nonmanagement-oriented professionals (Tomasko 1987). One reason for the trend toward nontraditional moves is that opportunities for upward career paths are decreasing because more companies are small and large companies are flattening their structures (Bardwick 1987).

Summary

The trend to provide adults with career education and counseling has been emerging and growing stronger during the 1980s. There is much left to be done to create and implement the types of programs and services that will assist the diverse adult population in making important career plans and decisions. Employers are aware that it is in their interest to provide career education programs that complement strategic human resource planning. These programs are helpful but, for some adults who have lost their jobs or find themselves in perplexing dual-career situations, not enough. Programs for displaced workers and for families are also emerging to provide the career information and strategies for growth needed amid the rapidly changing U.S. workplace.

PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

With fewer youth entering the work force, more attention is being paid to the youth who had previously been overlooked or pushed aside. A study by the Education Commission of the States (Brown 1985) concluded:

> The number of young people who are disconnected from school and work, and the benefits they confer, is on the rise. The entry-level labor pool, then, contains more and more of the kinds of teenagers employers have been able to overlook in the past: poorly motivated, lacking fundamental literacy skills and unacquainted with the responsibilities and demands of the work world. (p. 5)

Youth who deviate from the mainstream because they are disadvantaged, academically or physically handicapped, or from minority groups often have been excluded from entry-level jobs. The increasing numbers of entry-level jobs without sufficient applicants from the heretofore plentiful mainstream youth population have caused employers to consider and hire nonmainstream youth. A trend focusing on the career development needs of youth with special needs is emerging in the literature.

At-Risk or Dropout Youth

The issue of career education for at-risk youth or dropouts is fraught with vague and uncertain terminology. There are no commonly accepted definitions of at-risk or dropout, for example, that allow for consistent research or development of effective career education programs. Hammack (1986) and Rumberger (1987) discuss the problems of dropout data collection and analyses, pointing out that there is no reliable, valid data collection across states and even within states. Only estimates are available, with Rumberger's (1987) suggestion that the 1984 dropout rate for 18- to 19-year-olds was somewhere between 15 and 29 percent. There are much higher estimates for urban areas, falling somewhere in the 40-50 percent range (Barber and McClellan 1987). Dropout rates as high as 85 percent for Native Americans and 70-80 percent for Puerto Ricans have been reported in studies by the Institute for Educational Leadership (1986).

Many causes for dropping out are identified in the literature. A number of related issues emerge, since the tendency is to lump together all students who leave school, even though the dropouts themselves are as varied--or more so--than the students who graduate from high school. One of the issues is how to develop effective career education programs to meet so many varied needs; lacking interest in school, having poor grades, speaking a language other than English in the home, coming from a single-parent family, being pregnant, being truant frequently, having relatively little knowledge of the labor market, and having a low socioeconomic background are only a few of the needs or reasons for dropping out (Hahn 1987; Rumberger 1987). Wehlage and Rutter (1986) argue that schools must examine their roles to

overcome the estrangement and alienation that some students feel. Conrath (1986) describes at-risk youth as "discouraged" learners who are not necessarily low in ability but who lack self-confidence and need positive attention from teachers and counselors. They want to learn, but avoid school because it is demanding, threatening, confusing, or unresponsive to their needs.

An ongoing challenge is how to integrate the career education concepts and strategies that can strengthen students' fragile self-concepts and promote their understanding of the connections between staying in school to acquire basic and occupational skills and having a more fulfilling career throughout life. The following are some key career education elements of success in programs designed for at-risk youth:

- o There is an experiential work-related or community service component (Donnelly 1987; Institute for Educational Leadership 1986; Peck, Law, and Mills 1987).
- o Work programs are related to learning, and curriculum is related to the skills of the workplace. Job-seeking skills are taught when they are needed (Hahn 1987).
- o Intensive, individualized basic skills training is combined with work-related projects (Hodgkinson 1985).
- o Students are helped to establish and progress toward life career goals (Walz 1987).
- o Students see the link between making money and school subjects (Mann 1986).
- o Parents are involved in school learning activities (Walz 1987).

Transition from School to Work

Even without special problems or handicapping conditions, youth experience the move from school to the workplace as one of life's most difficult transitions. The complexity increases for youth from minority groups, bilingual youth, economically disadvantaged youth, and youth with handicapping conditions. The growing national concern with special needs students' transition from school to work is reflected in the number of recent studies, spurred by more than 200 grants from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (Will 1984). Several national surveys have been conducted (Rusch, McNair, and DeStefano 1988), whereas other studies have concentrated upon various aspects of transition as well as projects that demonstrate the most promising practices. Campbell and Basinger (1985) found that the transition process is different for each of the special needs groups and further complicated by such factors as (1) sociological environment, (2) role model influences, (3) personal drive for satisfaction, (4) economic conditions, and (5) moral and ethical value systems.

Drier and Ciccone (1988) believe that the transition process can be considerably improved when school counselors provide customized help and information to guide special needs youths' decisions and behaviors. For example, they should be informed about employers' standards for hiring. A national study (Miguel and Foulk 1984) confirmed the common-sense guidelines youth should follow to influence employers' decisions to hire them. These include--

- o clean and neat appearance at the interview,
- o interest shown during the interview by asking questions about the job,

- o interest shown after the interview by calling the employer,
- o neat and correctly completed job application, and
- o resume attached to job application.

Another study (Weber 1986) showed that special needs youth need extra assistance in understanding their options and the best routes to accomplish their goals. Counselors and teachers should inform these youth that the completion of a diploma, certificate, or degree will positively affect their employment chances and their earning potential. Education, especially postsecondary education, pays off even more for minority students (male and female) than for white males. Students not planning to pursue postsecondary education should concentrate heavily in a vocational specialty area, obtain work experience while in high school, and seek employment after graduation in a field related to their high school vocational education.

Some youth, especially those with mental and physical disabilities, require more than information and motivation to enter the job market successfully. Each year over 300,000 disabled youth leave school to face an uncertain future. Despite the nationwide emphasis on transition programs for disabled youth, their unemployment rate ranges from 50 to 80 percent (Hasazi, Gordon, and Roe 1984; Rusch, Chadsey-Rusch, White, and Gifford 1985). Those who do find jobs are often in semiskilled or low-paying jobs. Those who cannot find jobs stay with their families or move into adult care facilities and quickly lose many of the skills they acquired in school. The societal and economic loss is compounded by the loss of potential employees who would prefer to work rather than becoming a burden. The cost of about $12,000 per person for Supplemental Security Income, health care, housing, and food stamps can be cut in half when the money is used for transition services (Celis 1987).

An emerging trend is to provide more and better transition services that start before the student leaves school and continue, on an ad hoc basis, throughout life. One model, called parallel teaching, provides for complementary teaching or a continuous exchange between educators and employers (Langone and Gill 1985). An example might be when a special educator demonstrates to an industrial supervisor how to manage the behavior of a mentally retarded worker. In turn, the industrial supervisor provides information on emerging technological changes in the workplace so that the classroom can be improved and made more similar to the real work environment.

A more intense model that requires extraordinary coordination among the various agencies that have responsibilities for special education, vocational education, rehabilitation, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, and Private Industry Councils (PICs) as well as employers is called "train-place-train." A 3-year research/demonstration program, Project NETWORK, is developing the "train-place-train" model for interagency collaboration that assists students with disabilities in making the transition from high school to competitive employment (Ehrsten and Izzo 1988). This model emphasizes integration of services and programs that are already being offered by schools and agencies, such as vocational assessment, development of Individualized Education Plans, and on-the-job training. What is unique in this "train-place-train" model is the cooperation among these agencies to guarantee that the student-turned-employee is not "dropped" without adequate follow-up, coaching, and

retraining when necessary.

Summary

Among numerous developments in the area of career education for special needs youth, two of the most striking trends are the programs for at-risk or dropout-prone students and transition programs for students with disabilities. The anticipated strengthening of the Carl D. Perkins Act reauthorization language will increase the research, development, and establishment of career guidance programs (with career education components) for these youth. Programs for at-risk youth are encouraging but have to define their populations better, and their enormous diversities must be acknowledged in order to create more effective programs. Transition programs for youth with disabilities are increasing as the model proves successful for some of the most severely handicapped. However, the question of funding will certainly have a major role in determining the longevity of this trend. Transition programs are expensive and require far more interagency cooperation than most bureaucracies can tolerate.

USE OF COMPUTERS IN CAREER EDUCATION

Computers have not been considered fascinating toys for some time. Most people view them as useful tools that can sort and process a great deal of information quickly. As sophistication with using computers increases, so does the development of more sophisticated and useful computer programs that assist in career decision making and provide career-related information. A vast array of hardware and software is now available at reasonable costs for use in career education and guidance programs. Only a few of the many systems and uses are discussed in this section.

During the last decade, the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and its network of State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICCs), have developed a 47-state network of computer-based Career Information Delivery Systems (CIDS). Continually evolving, the CIDS have linked with commercial vendors and educators to provide increasingly useful career information for a growing number of clients and students (Flanders 1988).

During the 1980s, a major change in the CIDS has been the movement away from mainframe to microcomputer delivery. The use of microcomputers has allowed far greater flexibility and expansion of computerized career information delivery to more schools and other settings that would not have easy access to mainframe linkages. The growth of microcomputer memory is a significant aspect of this trend because the information is not limited by the amount that can be stored and managed by the computer. Currently, most microcomputers have 256K-640K internal memory with 20-30 megabytes of hard disk memory. These are already giving way to CD-ROMs (compact disk, read-only memory) that can hold vast amounts of data. One 3-inch CD holds more information than 1,500 floppy disks, more than is needed for all the information in the largest state's career information database (Lester and Ollis 1988).

A second trend is the increasing use of specialty software that enhances the basic occupational and education information with state or local information, financial information, or personal information about the student/client. For example, several systems are currently using the aptitude scores from the General Aptitude Test Battery and/or interest assessment data from the Self-Directed Search or the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory. Another trend is the creative use of other devices or systems in conjunction with computerized systems. These include DISCOVER's videodisc system and CIDS audiovisual enhancements. A final trend is the expansion of the use of computerized career information systems by elementary students, students with special needs, and adults in nonsecondary school settings such as the workplace (McKinlay 1988). For example, Kansas Careers is marketing a career exploration package in Spanish that has information on 300 occupations (McCormac 1988).

Computer Use by At-Risk Students

A study by Bloch (1988) indicates that the Career Information System (CIS), which is used at 3,000 sites in 16 northwestern states, is proving to be an effective tool for serving at-risk youth. Since the practical application of CIS to the career guidance of at-risk students had not previously been examined, the results are indicative of a trend to understand the advantages/disadvantages of using computers for various types of client groups. The two principal findings of this study were that computers and career information are motivational for at-risk youth and that programs for at-risk youth succeed when caring people have the time and tools to work with them. Using the computers to acquire information about themselves and careers appears to increase the students' locus of control so that they feel more in charge of their own lives.

Counselors see computers as a motivational tool and report that students like the reality of the information they provide (Bloch 1988). The following are a few examples of the observations of counselors who use CIS with at-risk youth:

> Students get a more realistic view of the world of work. . . . Students find out where the training they want is offered and make decisions on what fields of work to go into. . . . They see the need for education. . . . It is a starting point for career exploration not before available to them; they seem to really trust the computer. . . . It gives hope to those who have lost enthusiasm for school or for whom life has just become boring. . . . They can run the computer by themselves and enjoy seeing instant results on the printouts. . . . The parents are especially appreciative and very interested in the printouts. (Bloch 1988, pp. 14-18)

Summary

Growth and expansion of existing and new computer systems is an evident trend. Emerging trends include the increased use of microcomputers in various settings by new client groups, increased use of localized and personalized data, and the increased use of auxiliary devices such as videodiscs. An exciting development is the use of computer information systems for at-risk youth who might be encouraged to remain in school once they discover the possibilities and opportunities in the workplace. The federally funded NOICC and its network of state organizations (SOICCs) have made laudable progress in implementing computerized career information systems during the last decade. Most states (47) have a system that provides students and other clients with access to a wide range of information about the labor market, specific jobs, and career planning.

CONCLUSION

Using recent literature, this paper has examined trends and issues in career education. For the purposes of this paper, career education was regarded broadly, encompassing all levels of education, kindergarten through adult. This section presents some general observations about the trends and issues areas.

- **Career education is a viable construct.** Although there currently is no direct federal funding for career education, there is some agreement among proponents that the concept is viable, although some of its identity has been lost through integration into mainstream education. Much of the literature seems to take a defensive posture in attempting to prove that career education exists, that is is successful, that it is a critical aspect of educational reform, that it was the precursor and definer of the reform movements of the 1980s, and that its value should be recognized. Perhaps it is time to accept its existence as a relevant construct or strategy and to move on to more useful pursuits, such as conducting research that can answer the many unanswered questions about career development in this complex and changing society.

- **Career education, career guidance, and career development are distinct but related terms.** Many of the authors reviewed agree that these are not interchangeable terms. Yet, it was not always possible to distinguish the differences in the literature. As an issue, terminology will continue to frustrate those who understand that the differences are not merely semantic. Perhaps what is most important to advocates of career education is that the basic concepts continue to be infused into the K-12 curriculum and used in programs for adults.

- **Career education is fundamental in helping individuals cope with the changing workplace.** Although not all authors agree that workplace changes are very rapid or major, there is agreement that they require programs to assist individuals with occupational transitions. Career education can equip individuals with the skills needed to deal with change flexibly and to meet the requirements of a more global, information-oriented workplace.

- **Career education is a lifelong need.** Social and economic shifts cause many adults to change jobs or occupations more frequently. Many individuals are not prepared for the decisions they must make, nor for the cumulative pressures of dealing with family, work, and social responsibilities. Employers and employees are recognizing the benefits of providing career information and career development assistance.

- **Career education can help at-risk youth make the transition from school to work.** Although actual percentages of dropouts are not increasing, the reduction in the numbers of youth available for work is focusing attention on the needs

of the dropout-prone and high risk population. Although minorities are projected to become a greater proportion of the work force, minority youth are more prone to dropping out. An obvious challenge is to develop effective career education programs that will motivate these youth to stay in school and acquire the skills needed for entry and advancement in the workplace. Transition programs for disadvantaged and disabled youth are increasing and will continue to be a priority in elementary and secondary education.

- **Computers are a vital medium for the delivery of career education.** Many sophisticated systems are evolving for computerized career information, exploration, and decision making. In addition to the Career Information Delivery System highlighted in this paper, other programs are providing relevant and increasingly more localized and personalized assistance. From elementary schools to the workplace, computers give access to a wide range of information about the labor market, specific occupations, and career planning. At-risk youth respond well to the computer as a motivational tool because, as one study reports, "it helps them dream realistic dreams" (Bloch 1988, p. 18).

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